

TECHWOOD HOMES, GARAGE
BUILDING A-D
Olympic Housing Impact Area
Corner of Merritts Avenue and
Williams Street
Atlanta
Fulton County
Georgia

HABS No. GA-2257-B

HABS
GA,
61-ATLA,
60B-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Southeast Region
Department of the Interior
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

HABS
GA
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

TECHWOOD HOMES,
GARAGE BUILDING A-D

HABS No. GA-2257-B

Location: Corner of Merritts Avenue and Williams Street
Atlanta
Fulton County
Georgia

U. S. G. S. Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: Northing
3739/560, Easting 741/600

Present Owner/
Occupant: Atlanta Housing Authority
739 West Peachtree
Atlanta, Georgia 30365

Present use: Public housing storage
Part of Olympic Housing Impact Area
To be demolished

Significance: Techwood Homes, Garage Building A-D is a contributing building in the Techwood Homes Historic District, nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The building is significant for its role within the first federally funded public housing project in this country. Garage buildings completed the overall housing block pattern of two or three buildings and their corresponding open space. Garage Building A-D is one of the few garages remaining of the original 11 constructed. As such it illustrates the engineering and fireproof construction techniques used in garages throughout Techwood Homes.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1934-1936. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated Techwood on November 29, 1935. September 1, 1936 marked the official opening ceremony of the project and was proclaimed Techwood Day in Atlanta. No information has been found confirming the exact erection date of Garage Building A-D.
2. Architect: Burge and Stevens. The Atlanta architectural firm accepted an \$84,000 contract to design the Techwood Homes complex, of which Garage Building A-D was a part, on May 17, 1934. Flip Burge, one of the principals, was an original member of the Board of Trustees which secured federal approval for the Techwood project.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The Housing Division of the Public Works Administration (PWA) of the federal government had original jurisdiction over Techwood Homes. When the Federal Housing Administration was established in 1937, that agency assumed control of the project. The Atlanta Housing Authority was created in June of 1938, under the directorship of Charles F. Palmer, Atlanta real estate developer who had spearheaded the drive to make Techwood the first public housing project in the country. In March of 1940, the Atlanta Housing Authority took over administration of Techwood Homes under a lease agreement with the U. S. Housing Authority.
4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: J. A. Jones Construction Company of Charlotte, North Carolina built Techwood Homes, including Garage Building A-D, at a total cost of \$2,108,337, which included purchase of the land at 49 cents a square foot. No specific information on Garage Building A-D's individual costs, contractor, or suppliers has been located, although the construction project resulted in many local jobs.
5. Original plans and construction: The building remains a one-story concrete and red brick structure of narrow transverse dimension. Original plans are housed in the Engineering and Capital Improvements Department of the Atlanta Housing Authority.
6. Alterations and additions: No alterations or additions have been documented.

B. Historical Context:

The relationship of Garage Building A-D to its housing block is representative of the original configuration of buildings and functions. The garages were placed at the rear of the housing units, located along perimeter streets.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General statement:

1. Architectural character: Of architectural interest is the fireproof concrete, brick, and steel construction of Garage Building A-D.
2. Condition of fabric: The building appears to be in fair structural condition. It has been repointed poorly and is in need of maintenance and cosmetic attention.

B. Description of exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The building has a narrow transverse dimension of 18'-8" and has stalls measuring 8'-6" wide. It is linear in shape.
2. Walls: The side and rear walls are of 8-inch red brick.
3. Structural systems, framing: The roof is of solid concrete slab construction, 2 1/2 inches thick. It is reinforced with welded wire mesh and is supported on 10-inch steel channels. 4-inch H columns support the roof channels between the garage doors, according to the National Register Nomination.
4. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: A centrally-located metal roll up door and two metal side doors exist in the building's west facade.
 - b. Windows: There are no windows.
5. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: The roof is a solid concrete slab 2 1/2" thick.
 - b. Eaves: The building has no eaves.

C. Description of interior:

1. Floor plan: The garage is a linear box-shape with equal stalls.
2. Flooring: Floor is of solid concrete construction.
3. Walls and ceilings: Side and rear walls of the garage are red brick. The ceiling is solid concrete.

4. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: A centrally-located metal roll up door in the front of the building which faces west and two metal side doors exist in the building's west facade.
- b. Windows: The building has no windows.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Garage Building A-D faces west toward the three-building block of apartment houses it served. It is accessible from Merritts Avenue, N. W. and was originally also accessible from Williams Street, which no longer goes through following the construction of Interstates 75 and 85. A "Y" entrance driveway originally connected the garage group to Williams Street.
2. Historic landscape design: The original landscape plan featured *Elaeagnus* (*Elaeagnus pungens*) and a variety of other shrubs, possibly for screening purposes between apartment buildings and the garage units. No recognizable pattern of original landscape plantings remains.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings:

Several sets of drawings are available, including:

- original drawings
- drawings dated February 15, 1936
- Atlanta Housing Authority site plan, 1962
- comprehensive modernization drawings by Allain and Patterson, 1981

Photographs of selected examples of original drawings are included in the submittal for HABS No. GA-2257-C, as follows: planting plan and plant list (photo # GA-2257-C-15) and plot and roof plan (photo # GA-2257-C-16). Original drawings are housed at the Engineering and Capital Improvements Department of the Atlanta Housing Authority.

B. Historic views:

Historic photographs are archived at the Atlanta History Center. A number of newspaper articles and other sources listed in Part III.C include historic views.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Atlanta Urban Design Commission, files.
Atlanta History Society, vertical files, newspapers,
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2. Secondary and published sources:

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"New 3-Million Housing Unit Near Techwood." Sunday American, 12 February 1939, 1.

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D. Supplemental material: Following this outline format text are two 8 1/2" x 11" sketch drawings, as follows:

- historic site of Techwood Homes with Garage Building A-D indicated
- site plan of existing historic district with Garage Building A-D indicated

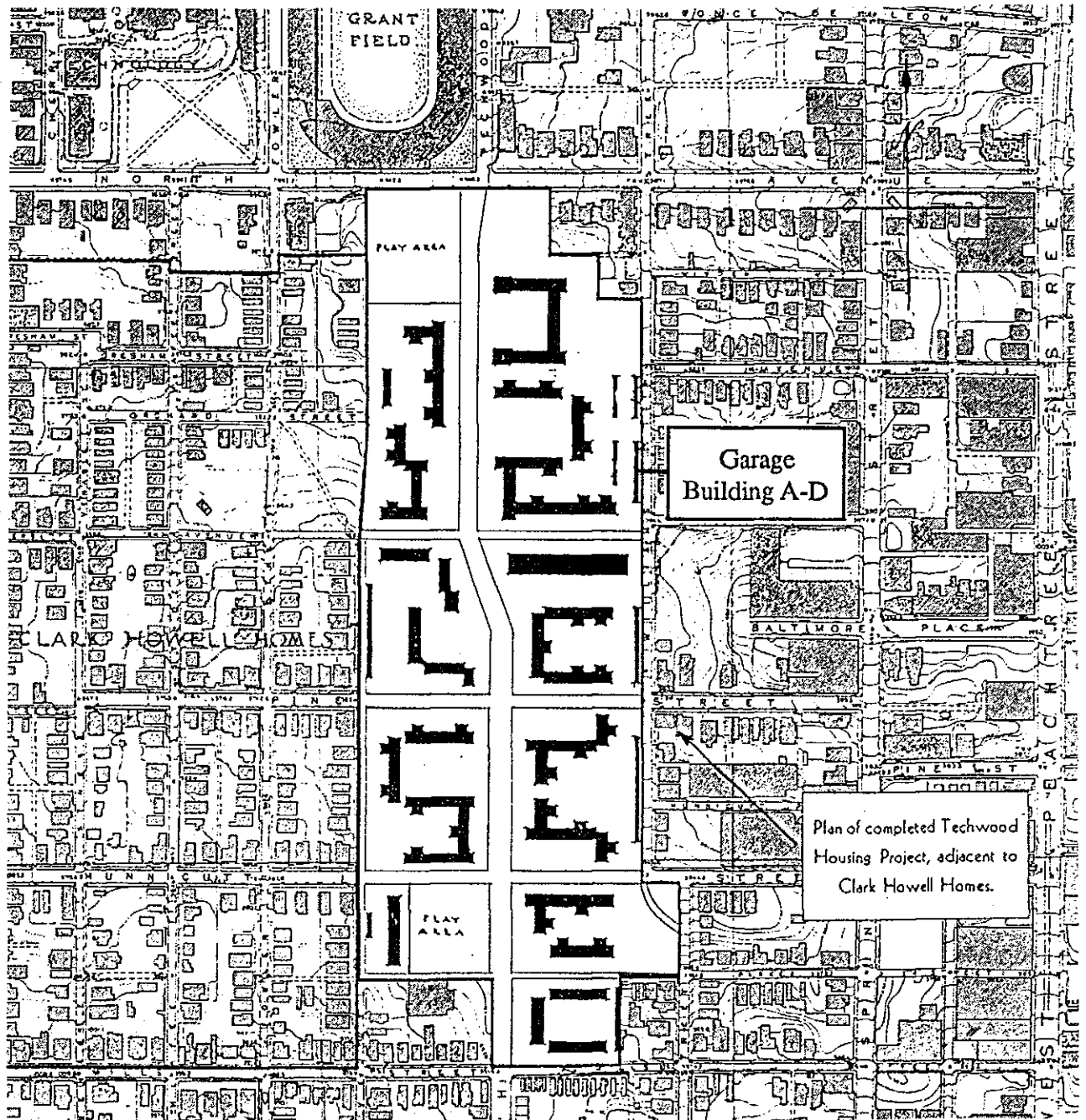
PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This HABS documentation packet is being prepared in compliance with a stipulation of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that addresses the impact of the Olympic Housing Impact Area on the Techwood Homes Historic District. The MOA is dated March 19, 1993. Parties to the MOA are: the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Georgia State Historic Preservation Officer, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Board of Regents of the University System of the State of Georgia, and the Housing Authority of the City of Atlanta.

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HISTORIC SITE PLAN OF TECHWOOD HOMES



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SITE PLAN OF TECHWOOD HOMES HISTORIC DISTRICT

